

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Previously Presented) A method of assigning thread priority comprising:  
assigning priority to a first thread in a multi threaded processor;  
loading a preliminary value to a thread precedence counter;  
assigning priority to a second thread in response to expiration of said thread precedence counter;  
determining if there is an indication of approaching instruction side starvation for said first thread wherein instruction fetching for said first thread would be blocked due to processing one or more instructions from another thread; and  
incrementing a value stored in a first starting counter in response to an indication of approaching instruction side starvation for said first thread.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said preliminary value is based on athe value stored in the first starting counter associated with said first thread.
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein determining if there is an indication of approaching instruction side starvation for said first thread includes